

{ PROJECT }

BILGOLA BEACH HOUSE

{ ARCHITECT }

OLSON KUNDIG



BELLEVARDE

Welcome to Building with Belvedere: Insights.

In this edition, we'll learn more about an exceptional and unique house in the Northern Beaches.

Storms, flooding, salt, and summer heat are just a few of the hurdles that needed to be overcome in the design and build at this beachside location. Belvedere's Mick Carroll helmed the project and the team came through with an outstanding result.

It was our first collaboration with Olson Kundig architects out of Seattle, USA and it was a hugely rewarding experience. We hope to work with them again.

We hear from architects Tom Kundig and Simon Clews of Olson Kundig, as well as project manager Csaba Kaposi of Auric Projects, about what it was like working with Mick and the Belvedere team on this special house.

We hope you enjoy their stories.

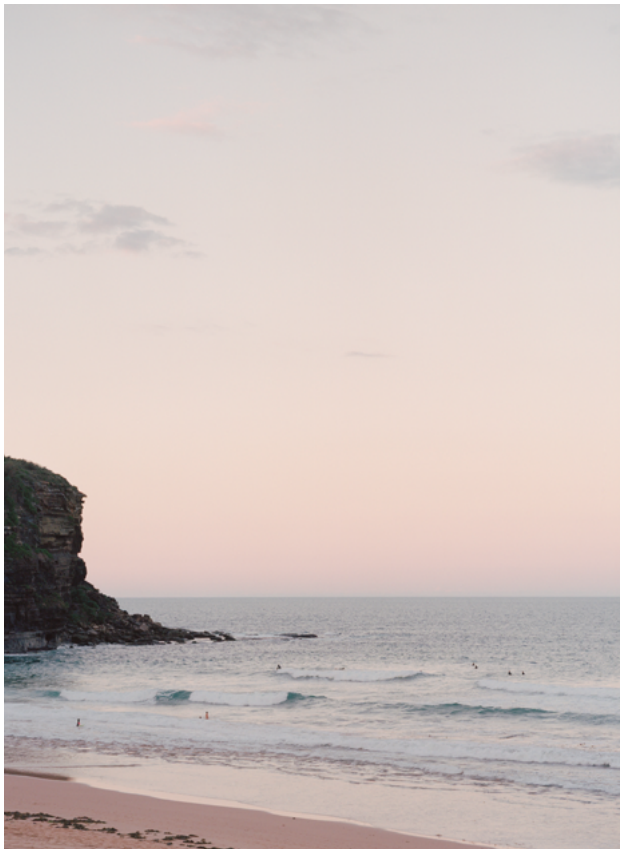
As always, we welcome any questions, feedback, or opportunities to discuss your next project.



JOHN FIELDING
AND THE BELVEDERE TEAM







The clients are from the Bilgola Beach area and, after living abroad for many years, were looking forward to retiring there. They envisioned this home as a place for the whole family—including children and grandchildren—to gather and spend time together, but also needed it to function as a comfortable home for just two people. So the home is organized to balance both public and private spaces, including a central gathering zone and a wing of guest bedrooms, plus a private suite on the second level. The design draws inspiration from the sand dunes and cliff faces of Bilgola Bay. The home's concrete forms echo those natural features, including the color that's the same as the surrounding sand. We wanted it to feel as though the house had grown out of the dunes.

The clients love the beach and wanted to be able to engage with the surrounding landscape as much as possible, while remaining protected from harsh summer sun and during storms or other more challenging weather events. Sliding window walls allow the home to fully open to the landscape, and to capture breezes and natural daylight. A central courtyard and water feature creates a threshold between public and private zones, while also helping to cool the air.

The materials and palette draw direct inspiration from the surrounding landscape. We selected durable materials that would hold up to the environment, and with the internal courtyard, support passive heating and cooling. To enable the home to open and close, we developed a custom exterior shutter system.

It allows the interior to receive that natural daylight, moderated in the height of the summer and able to change as conditions change throughout the day. It also allows them to control their preferred level of privacy. The board-formed concrete on the exterior will also continue to soften and blend with the landscape, allowing the home to become even more integrated with the environment over time.

This is a really special project for me, as my first in Australia. I am super excited about how well this project works on so many levels—sustainability and building performance; daylighting; climatic response; family, cultural, spatial relationships. It's a building that can grow, shrink and respond to all the different conditions that it will be part of for many, many years.

I could not be more thrilled with the finished house. These were great clients, who came to us with an exciting agenda to create a family home that would be integrated with its special site. It was an honor to work with them and with Belvedere and the team in Australia. I could not be more proud of the final product!





We interviewed several candidates, but Belvarde were the first to reach out to us. They had heard about the project locally and wrote to us to express their interest and share their work. In talking with them, we thought their experience and approach was a great fit for the design and vision we were hoping to achieve.

Logistics were challenging. The location itself can be a very harsh environment, from flooding and storms to summer heat. There's a lot of steel work and custom elements that required focus—those fine details are often what make or break a project. Big hurdles but ultimately the rewards are even bigger!

Mick Carroll and the Belvarde team were the ultimate collaborators and craftspeople! The quality of work they can achieve in what was an atypical environment is evident. They had an innate ability to take an issue or a challenge and work with us to generate an elegant, beautiful solution. They absolutely realised our vision. They jumped into the work from the beginning and rose to the occasion at every opportunity. There was some pressure for us, certainly, with this being the first Australian project for Tom and for the firm. We knew working with an international team would be challenging, in terms of logistics, collaboration and communication, as well as keeping everyone aligned with the joint vision for the project. In every aspect, Belvarde delivered.

Belvarde were a huge contributing factor in the success of the gizmo integration and exterior shutter system, along with the fabrication and design team. Those elements are an integral part of what we do and ultimately how this home would react to the surrounding site. These are bespoke inventions we are delivering. To work with fabricators out of state and designers out of the country and maintain a high level of quality and craft is a very special thing.

There's a sense of calm that the house brings. The site can change daily, even hourly, from a gentle breeze to a rolling storm, but you always feel sheltered. It is a place on the edge of the earth to be and look out at the horizon and contemplate. The concrete itself is extremely unique and beautiful—what may seem a harsh, solid material has a subtle, natural texture due to its construction method. The light washes across the concrete throughout the day creating an almost meditative atmosphere. It's a building that will change throughout the day and respond to your needs.

The client has said this is their favourite place to be, and that is all we can hope for as designers. It's a home for their entire family to reunite back in Australia, after living around the world. The family has a long history in the area, so there's a great sense of pride in being able to deliver that for them.

I'm beyond proud to help deliver a home like this, especially in this part of the world, close to where I am from. It's a very special place for a wonderful family that took a risk, showed a lot of faith in us and our team, and to be a part of a project like this is very rewarding.

The level of quality and craft throughout the home is incredible, and that is a testament to the team on all levels. The level of collaboration and craft Belvarde brought to the project is wonderful. The pride that Mick and the team take in their work is evident. They have the built knowledge, but also an artistic eye to help realize our design intent.

I would absolutely recommend working with Belvarde. We're always watching for the right opportunity to work with John, Mick and the rest of the Belvarde team, and looking forward to the next project.









As project manager for the Bilgola Beach House, it is with pleasure that I provide this reference for Belvarde Constructions.

In the first instance, I would commend the quality of the work undertaken by Belvarde staff and their subcontractors. I have spoken with some of the subcontractors directly and they have all referred to the exacting nature of the finished work expected from them, yet they continue to work with Belvarde. The quality is the best I have seen in 40 plus years in the property, project and construction management industry. This first-hand experience, working with Belvarde, encompasses 10 years on both commercial and high-end residential projects.

I can also praise the manner in which the site project management is undertaken where Belvarde staff go out of their way to maintain very good relationships with all stakeholders, even in volatile and politically sensitive situations. Their approach to working with design and management teams is professional, helpful, collaborative, and assistive where they ensure that the consultants, owners and project managers all work together to deliver the information in a timely, accurate and buildable manner. This co-operative attitude resolves numerous details in time and delivers the requisite quality required for each project.

In the rare instances where defects have occurred, they have returned to rectify these at their own cost even after the defect's liability period has expired. They also back up their product with a comprehensive maintenance service available to all their clients.

I have no reservations in recommending Belvarde to any prospective owner or developer, nor would I have any reservations in engaging them again.

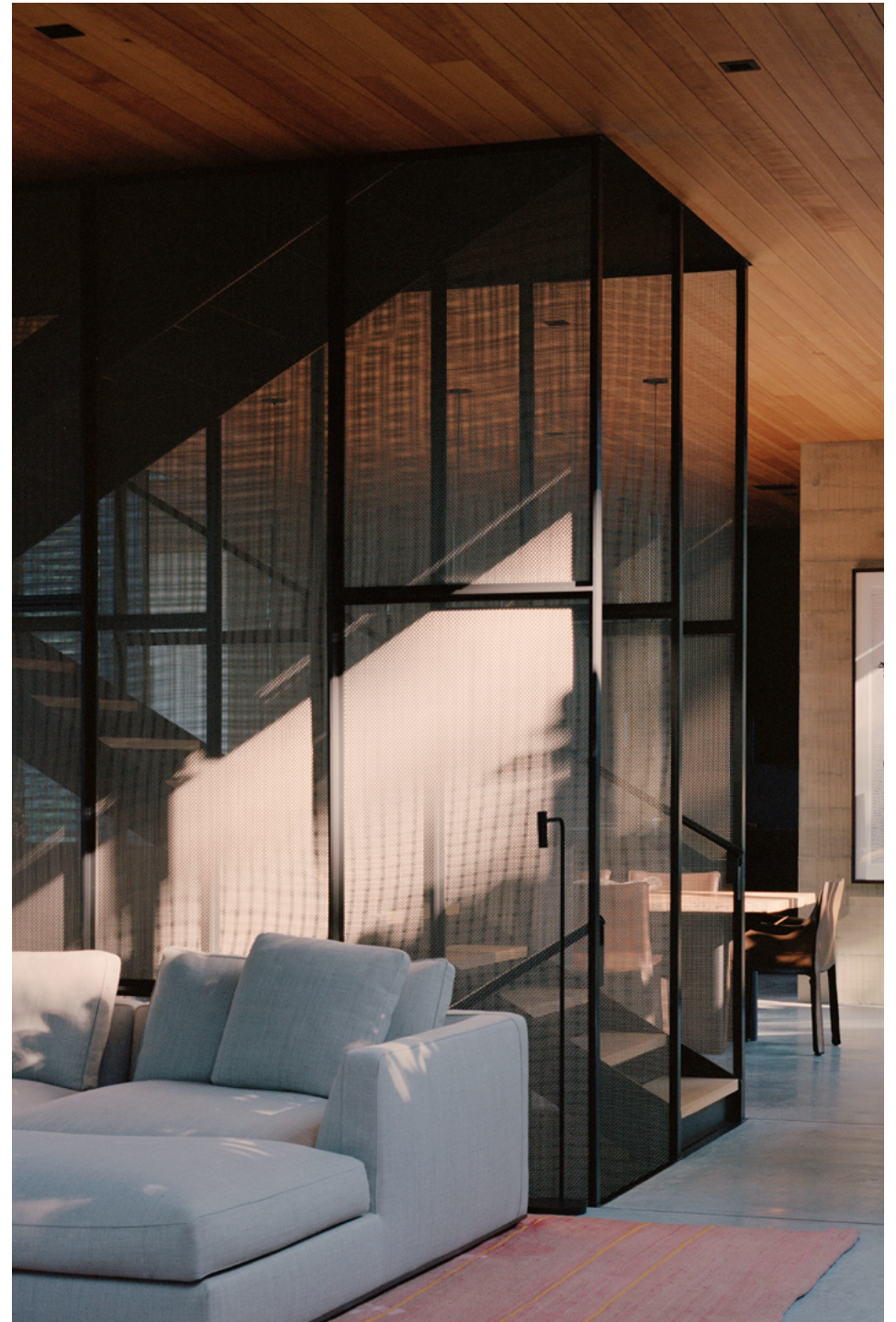
It has been a real pleasure dealing with such professional teams and John Fielding.

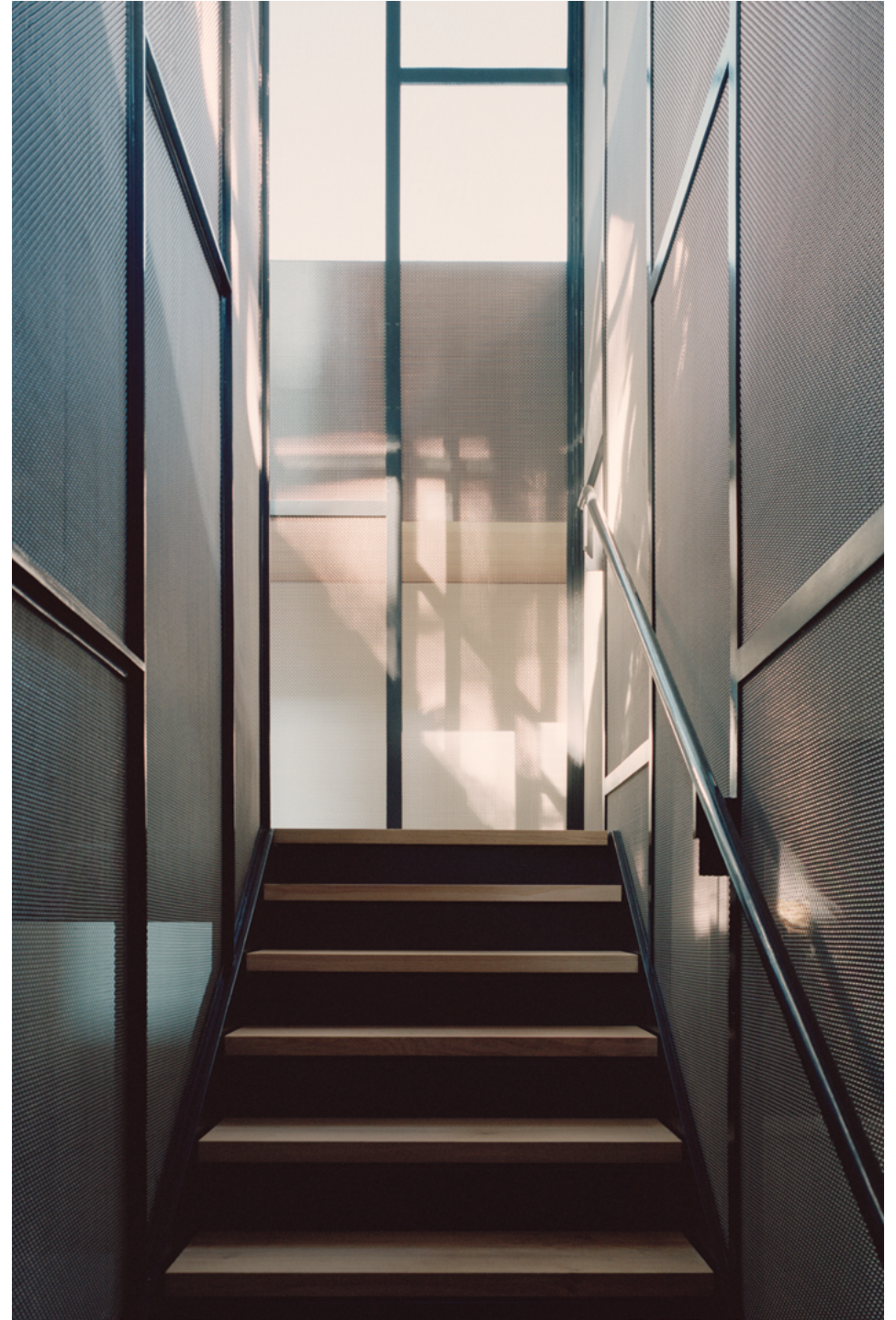




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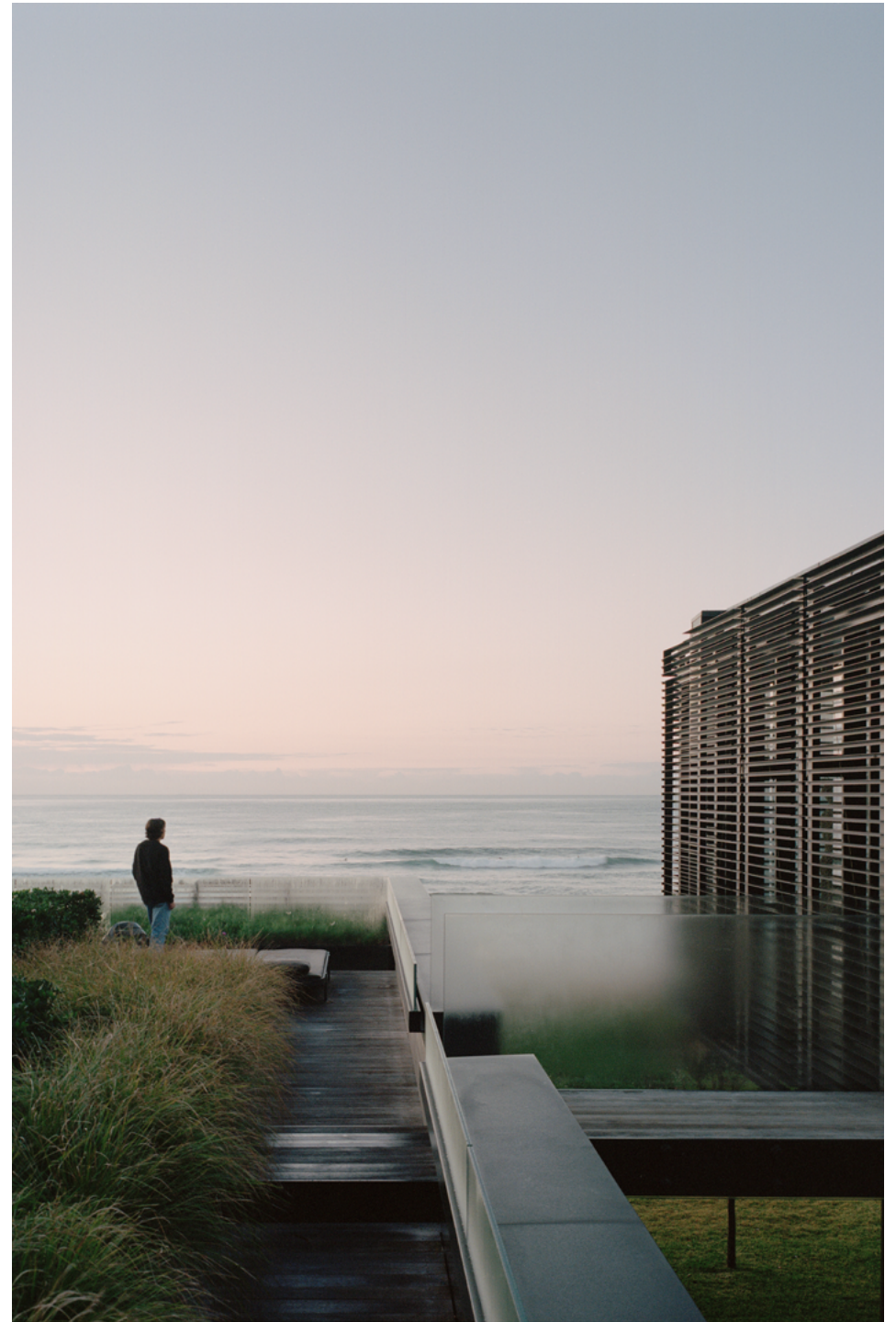












At Belvelarde, we have four principles that have served us well in ensuring we maintain standards across every job.

{First Principle}

FIND THE BEST PEOPLE

It is about searching until we find the people who share our love for building houses as well as they can be built.

That's what Belvelarde is—a team of us who just want to build extraordinary houses. It is an attitude that can't be driven or constrained by external factors. It's innate.

We employ apprentices to artisans and experienced site managers—the rest are tried and trusted contractors. Many of our people have been with us for over 20 years and a few for more than 40.

{Second Principle}

KEEP ON LEARNING

Everything we have learned in building some of this country's most complex and challenging houses is formalised in our 200-page Belvelarde Construction Manual.

It details step-by-step instructions on how best to perform every critical task.

It is on every site and is constantly reviewed and updated as our knowledge grows and as building techniques, materials, equipment, and technologies, evolve.

We visit completed builds and catalogue the best of each project to continually improve and refine our methods. We also keep a library of our favourite architecture and building publications to stay informed of the latest developments and learn from others.



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{Third Principle}

FORM A BUILDING TEAM

It takes three key players to create a great house: owner, architect and builder. That is why, on each site, we form the building team headed by our site manager who lives the project start to finish. The trio meets regularly to review, discuss, and guide every aspect of the project. This ensures everyone knows just where we are, where we are going next—and ensures that the team make the best decisions.

It is the best way to deliver an extraordinary house that only ever costs what it should cost, and brings great joy to all of us.

{Fourth Principle}

MAINTAIN THE HOUSE

This came from listening to owners. They asked us to take care of their houses as well as we built them. So we formed our own specialised Belvelarde Maintenance division. It benefits from access to all information about the build. Plus we can often call on the very tradespeople who built it.

Each new home has its own maintenance manager, who thoroughly understands the house and cares deeply about maintaining it to the highest standards.

According to owners and architects, we deliver the most efficient and skilled post completion care they have ever worked with—indeed several have asked us to take care of other properties we didn't build.

We welcome any questions, feedback or opportunities to discuss your prospective projects.

{Construction}

2016—2018

{Interviews}

Hamish Spencer

{Design}

Pidgeon Ward

{Photography}

Rory Gardiner

{Paper}

Colorplan, Knight Smooth

{Printing}

Adams Print

